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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5846
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1623
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4454
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3672
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0376
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 2018
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5901
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2466
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9383
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 3498
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7749
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SIPDIS

STATE FOR NP, AC, PM

STATE FOR INR/MR

STATE FOR SCA/INS, PM/CBM, PM/PRO

STATE FOR SCA/PPD, PA/RRU

STATE FOR AID/APRE-A

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TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PAKISTAN, U.S./IRAN, TERRORISM
REPORT, UNITED STATES/ECONOMY, IRAQ; NEW DELHI - MARCH
21-23, 2008.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media
reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press.
The Mission reports on English-language media via email
through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

PAKISTAN

[1](#)1. "AMERICA'S INAPPROPRIATE ADVICE," editorial in March
21 DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily: "The U.S. advice to India
to pull back its troops from the Indo-Pakistan border is
inappropriate. Islamabad projects to the U.S. that it
cannot concentrate on fighting terrorists active on the
Afghanistan border because of Indian troop build-up. Is
the U.S. administration willing to guarantee that there
would not be terrorist infiltration from Pakistan? It is
clear that the U.S. is only concerned about terrorist
organizations which pose a threat to it and Europe."

[1](#)2. "WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO PAKISTAN?" op-ed article by
editor Kumar Ketkar in March 22 left-of-center Marathi
daily LOKSATTA. "The U.S. is at a loss for a solution to
any of the unfolding crises in Pakistan. The only
solution it can offer is to augment its troops on the
Pakistan-Afghanistan border, on the assumption that a
robust U.S. military presence there will help the U.S. to
contain the mayhem and political violence in Pakistan. To
some extent, even the Pakistani administration wants the
U.S. forces to counter the rise of the Taliban. The U.S.

cannot afford the Taliban's hold over Pakistan. It is already so difficult to negotiate with Pakistan; it will be worse if the Taliban becomes a legitimate partner in the Pakistani administration."

¶3. "NEW POLITICAL TUSSELE IN PAKISTAN", editorial in March 21 right-of-center Urdu daily MUNSIF: "In Pakistan, democracy is always shaky. This round went to Nawaz Sharif, but Asif Ali Zardari is hatching a conspiracy in collaboration with other political parties to oust PM Gilani from power. It is possible that democracy may be shattered again within a few months."

U.S./IRAN

¶4. "IRAN-U.S. RELATIONS," editorial in the March 23 CPI (M) Bengali Organ GANASHAKTI. "Is the U.S. going to change its Iran policy under Obama? Iranian leaders want to see concrete examples of changes in American perception. The fundamental question is: will the U.S. stop supporting hostile groups against Iran? A new phase in ties may begin only if [the Obama Administration's] words match its actions."

¶5. "IRAN'S REACTION ON U.S. INITIATIVE" editorial in March 23 right-of-center Urdu daily ETEMAAD: "On Iran, Obama seems to be trying a different approach. He brought hope initially, but as far as the Muslim world is

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concerned, nothing has changed. In his message, Obama has said nothing that can heal the wounds inflicted on Iran."

¶6. "SAGACIOUS DECISION OF OBAMA", editorial in the March 21 right-of-center Urdu daily RASHTRIYA SAHARA, New Delhi: "Obama's proclamations show he is against enhancing international tensions. Mending relations with Iran is a step in this direction. Obama's first step should be to ease economic sanctions against Iran. The Iranian leadership too has indicated its readiness to improve ties with America. It is hoped that Obama will discontinue previous strategies that made U.S-Iran relations bitter."

¶7. "AMERICA OFFERS NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN", editorial in the March 21 right-of-center Urdu daily SIASAT: "Obama's efforts to mend relations with Iran demonstrate a sea change in U.S. policy. These efforts should not be allowed to fall prey to any conspiracy. Iran should also respond positively. Israel will try its level best to sabotage U.S-Iran relations."

¶8. "OBAMA'S MESSAGE TO IRAN", editorial in the March 22 right-of-center Urdu daily SIASAT, Hyderabad: "It is heartening that America is ready to forget the acrimonies of the past and reconsider its policies vis-à-vis Arab and Muslim nations. Obama's peaceful overtures are a breath of fresh air, provided they are genuine."

PATTERNS OF GLOBAL TERRORISM REPORT

¶9. "WHAT IF MASOOD AZHAR IS HANDED OVER?" editorial in the March 22 VIR ARJUN Hindi daily by editor Anil Narendra: "Nothing better demonstrates just how ill-equipped India is to counter terror than the latest U.S. State Department report that ranks the country among the world's most terror-hit nations. The US annual report has also rapped India for its slothful law enforcement and justice systems, calling them outdated and overburdened. The UPA government's timid approach towards terrorists is increasingly becoming an obstacle to fighting terror in our backyard."

¶10. "INDIA SHOULD FREE ITSELF OF U.S. INFLUENCE" edit-page article in March 23 Guwahati Assamese ASAMIYA PRATIDIN by columnist Sajjad Hussain. "As a safeguard against growing terrorism in Pakistan, India should adopt an independent diplomatic and foreign policy which is not influenced by the U.S. India should make efforts to form an effective regional alliance to fight Pakistan-based terrorism."

UNITED STATES/ECONOMY

¶11. "TOUGH OBAMA," editorial in March 23 right-of-center Gujarati daily GUJARAT SAMACHAR. "Obama expressing his

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frustration and astonishment at AIG's decision to share bonuses with its employees is totally justifiable. It is totally unfair on the part of such companies to corner hard-earned aid in the form of largesse... even India needs to adopt Obama's style. After all, such packages come from the taxpayers' money."

IRAQ

¶12. "SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF INVASION OF IRAQ", editorial in March 22 right-of-center Urdu daily RASHTRIYA SAHARA: "Six years of Bush's aggressiveness are over! President Obama has startled the whole world with his announcement that U.S-Iran talks should be resumed. Obama's message shows that U.S. policy is undergoing a real change, but the U.S. administration can go only as far as the powerful Jewish lobby will let it."
WHITE